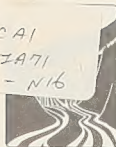


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NAHANNI

NATIONAL PARK RESERVE

Parks
CanadaParks
Canada

October, 1983

Management Planning Program

Newsletter Number 2

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NAHANNI NEWSLETTER

Parks Canada is developing a plan for Nahanni National Park Reserve that will guide the management and development of the park into the next decade.

To develop the best possible management plan, it is essential that the planning team find out what your ideas and suggestions are regarding the resource management, visitor use, and development issues of the park.

Early in March, 1983, the planning team distributed a newsletter to present information, stimulate discussion, and identify issues. Subsequently, five public meetings were held in the Northwest Territories. Public meetings were also held in Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, and Ottawa. At these nine meetings some 400 people gave their personal views and opinions of the issues. Over 250 people from across the country also returned a mailback questionnaire. Several lengthy briefs were submitted by individuals, groups and organizations in response to the program.

We offer our sincere thanks to the individuals and groups who took the time to help us plan for Nahanni. This newsletter is a summary of your responses.

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE ISSUES

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Your response indicated an overwhelming approval of the planning principles. This response clearly shows that Nahanni's management plan and future operations should strive to maintain the park's wilderness character and resources. Some respondents pointed out a number of existing management practices which they felt contradicted the principles. These are included in this summary.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Wildlife Management

Many people felt that the park should be expanded to give additional protection to certain wildlife species, or that buffer zones be established around the park to ensure wildlife protection. Increased wildlife monitoring programs were suggested, as were co-operative agreements with peripheral agencies responsible for wildlife. Some people felt that native hunting should be banned completely, or phased out. Hunting in a National Park or a National Park Reserve is prohibited by National Park Wildlife Regulations Section 4(1) (a). Wildlife harvesting may be carried out by natives in the Yukon or N.W.T. where hunting has been a traditional activity. Nahanni is one such area. The Park was set aside as a "reserve for a national park, subject to a settlement of any right, title or interest of the people of native origin" when the

NATIONAL PARKS ACT was amended in 1974. It is important to note that hunting, trapping and fishing activities by the native people of the Nahanni region will continue to be permitted within Nahanni National Park Reserve pending the legal settlement of native land claims in this area.

"The present narrow corridor and small park area relative to the needs of viable populations ensure that Parks Canada can have no effective management control over any populations whose animals are much larger, or migratory than squirrels or marten."

"Develop a buffer zone around the park with no hunting."

Fish Management

With respect to fishing, most respondents felt that the preservation of fish populations should come first in light of the limited ability of cold mountain waters to support fish populations. Reduced limits, closer monitoring programs, and even complete fishing bans were suggested.

Fire Management

There was a general recognition that fires are an important part of the boreal forest ecosystem. Some people felt that a total "let burn" policy was appropriate while others favoured modified suppression to preserve certain areas or features. In general, the issue did not provoke a great deal of

comment. Parks Canada's present agreement of designating an area west of York Ridge, a total suppression zone, while the rest of the park is an observation zone, was seen as a workable approach to fire management of the park. Some people suggested detailed fire histories be completed so that decisions to allow fires to burn could be made on the age and condition of forest stands. Others felt that all fires of human origin should be extinguished and all others left burn. Given the wilderness nature of the park, some people felt it contradictory if any facilities in the park should be so large or expensive that they could not be lost to fire. Still others mentioned increased public education and information about fires and the importance of involving regional residents in developing fire management practices.

"Fire is and must continue to be an important natural force in the Nahanni environment. Ideally a fire management strategy for a wilderness park such as Nahanni should be to allow natural fires to burn and to encourage a fire regime which is similar to that which could be expected in the absence of man."



ZONING

Zoning in Nahanni was a major concern of a large number of people as almost 80% of the respondents chose to comment on the subject. Perhaps the most consistent comment was that Zone IV (Outdoor Recreation) was self-defeating for the purposes and objectives of a wilderness-oriented park. The extent of the zone, 174 km. of the South Nahanni River below Virginia Falls, was seen as contradictory to the park's character.

Strong support was given for the existing Zone I (Special Preservation) areas. Additional suggestions for Zone I status included Pulpit Rock, Tlogisho Plateau, Virginia Falls, Deadman Valley and the karst topography north of First Canyon.

While Zone I designation was supported almost unanimously by people for preservation reasons, many people also mentioned the importance of allowing access to special areas whenever possible. Some people were concerned that access was too often curtailed and suggested various methods of

visitor control if a feature required special protection (group size limits, guided tours, special permits, etc.). Providing opportunity for access was generally deemed important.

Access to the Grotte Valerie cave was mentioned several times. There was a genuine recognition that this is a very fragile resource. Suggestions were made that special guided tours be implemented as they have been for Rabbitkettle Hot Springs.

"There must be some methods devised to allow access to all areas, even Zone I; total prohibition results in no public appreciation."

"Zone IV in a wilderness park?"

"The outdoor recreation zone is not appropriate when wilderness is the essence of Nahanni. Not even a 'minor extent' of outdoor recreation is appropriate."

"There should be no Zone IV, no motorized access, and no recreational facilities."

National Parks
Centennial

1885



1985

Centenaire des
parcs nationaux

1885-1985:
100 years of Heritage Conservation
Canada's first national park was established in 1885 at Banff, Alberta. Today there are national parks and national historic parks in every province and territory. The National Parks Centennial is an occasion to renew our commitment to preserve examples of our heritage unimpaired for the benefit of all Canadians.

PARK BOUNDARIES

The question of park boundaries raised many responses with 77% of mailbox respondents commenting on boundaries. A large majority of people, both as mailbox respondents and as public meeting participants (90%+) favoured a review of the park's boundaries for various reasons. Most often mentioned was the poor ecological considerations given to the present boundary designation, and wildlife protection. Many others commented on the necessity to include features in the park omitted in the original boundary designation if Nahanni was to represent the Mackenzie Mountains Region. Still others mentioned boundary alterations as a method of controlling environmental impact. Some people thought that for a wild river park, Nahanni had omitted the best wildlife water upstream of the boundary.

Opposition to boundary alterations was expressed by some respondents based on the prime hunting to be found around the park. Others felt that boundary alterations would disrupt the economic livelihoods of hunting outfitters and guides.

"A better set of boundaries will emerge for Nahanni if Parks Canada will shift its emphasis from the 'river corridor' concept and instead emphasize that the Nahanni area has no equal in Canada for a combination of geological, biological, and historical diversity."

"The park's current boundaries ignores the realities of the landscape."

"We feel the park is big enough already and that access to some of the better hunting and fishing areas has already been all but eliminated."

"Depriving the hunters and guides who are virtually the only ones who have used these areas for years, the right to hunt there anymore is just not fair."

VISITOR USE & ENJOYMENT

Facilities

This issue brought a 74% response rate from the mailback portion of the newsletter. The most often mentioned response to facility development in Nahanni was a concern that the wilderness character of the park should be protected. Many people voiced the opinion that there should be no facilities. Others felt that minimal facilities such as food caches and pit privies were necessary at concentration areas such as Virginia Falls. Many people asked for the removal of picnic tables from the river corridor. A consistent theme was that care be taken that "improvements" are not made at the expense of the park's wilderness. Respondents expressed a desire to retain their own self-reliance.

"No service facilities except where essential for good park management."

"No facilities! This is a wilderness park."

"Seek to attract visitors who enjoy the wilderness of Nahanni."



OFF-RIVER OPPORTUNITIES

There was a strong and consistent interest among people to have more opportunities to see some of the off-river areas of the park. A number of people suggested there should be more hiking opportunities but suggested that there should be no developed, or designated trails. Many people voiced the opinion that not enough detailed literature was available about backcountry areas.



"Hiking should be encouraged but no designated trails. Better maps and hiking pamphlets."
"One or two trails should be developed all the way from Nahanni Butte to the west boundary."
"No specific support but let people explore where they wish on their own."

INTERPRETATION

Many people mentioned the lack of suitable self-guiding literature for the park. Some people voiced a frustration at not knowing what the features were that they were seeing during their trip. The guided tour of Rabbitkettle Hot Springs was often mentioned as the type of event suitable for other areas of a fragile nature which would allow people to see park features that required special protection.

AIR ACCESS

The question of air access prompted responses from 55% of total respondents. The majority of people felt that aircraft access was essential as a mode of reaching park headwaters to begin water trips, however, aircraft use for overflights and day use received mostly negative responses (66%). Unlimited air access was strongly opposed as being detrimental to the park's wilderness integrity.

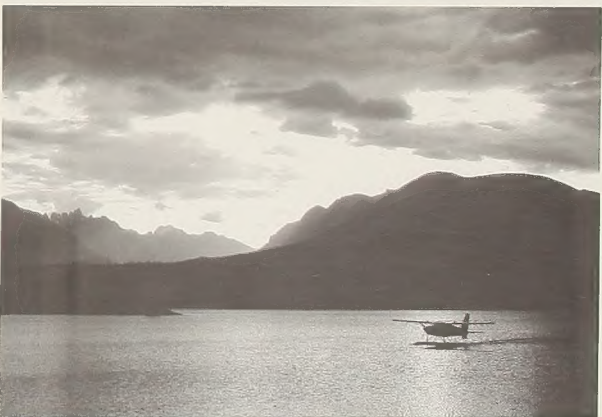
"Aircraft should be used to carry travellers to the beginning of their trip. Other roles such as sightseeing and day-use should be discouraged or prohibited."

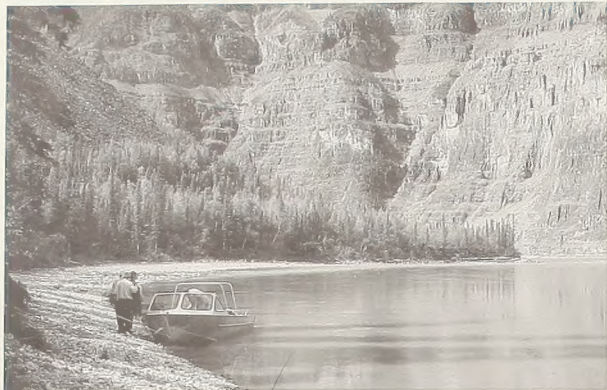
"Air access is compatible but only to Rabbitkettle Lake."

"Aircraft in general, and particularly helicopters, degrade the wilderness."

"Sightseeing overflights can spoil the experience of ground travellers."

A few people mentioned height restrictions or schedules that would allow air access for sightseeing or day use. Others mentioned the appropriateness of aircraft in the north as opposed to roads. Still others thought that only emergencies warranted aircraft use in the park. There was a clear indication that air access, if provided, must be restricted to certain designated areas. A clear majority of people distinguished between use of aircraft to get to a headwaters destination and aircraft use through the park for sightseeing. A few people were concerned with the high cost of air charters and suggested road development to the park boundary.





MOTORIZED BOAT ACCESS

This issue brought an 80% response from the total number of persons who returned the mailbox portion of the newsletter. There was an overwhelming response (85%) opposed to motorized river access on the South Nahanni. Most people commented on the intrusion, noise, and inappropriate use of motorcraft in a wilderness area. Motorized access was mentioned as being appropriate in emergency situations, or for use by park staff for river patrols although others were also opposed to park use of jet boats. Some people favouring motorboat access cited reasons of safety, time constraints, or opportunities for the elderly to tour the river. Those who did favour some form of motorboat access also mentioned the importance of zoning restrictions, motor size limits, or limiting motorized use to tour boat operations. There was a clear consensus that motorcraft posed a potential threat to the wilderness objectives of the park.

"Motorized craft are incompatible with the park's wilderness character."

"Motor boats should be restricted only to park staff or for emergencies."

"No — both modes should be allowed. Harmony will develop."

OUTFITTING

Outfitting and guiding was clearly seen as having a valuable role to play in Nahanni. Most people mentioned the benefits of skilled outfitters making it possible for a greater variety of visitors to see the park. It was also clear that people saw a definite responsibility and role for outfitters and guides to educate visitors on the appropriate use of wilderness areas, and in helping to protect special features. The role of guides as qualified interpreters of the park's natural history was also mentioned. Particular emphasis was placed on non-motorized modes of commercial travel, and minimal, if any, permanent facilities, supporting outfitters. Participation of native communities in commercial outfitting was also mentioned as being beneficial to both local communities and visitors.

"Non-motorized operations seem to complement the wilderness experience. Non-motorized guides — non-permanent camps."

"The role of outfitters is to provide access to people who have not been camping before and wish to go to the park."

"Outfitters can help maintain the wilderness character by setting an example for their clients."

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Many people were very concerned about the peripheral developments in the Nahanni watershed and the potential dangers these pose to the park's environment. A variety of suggestions to counter potential environmental impacts were given including establishment of industrial buffer zones, boundary alterations, intervention in industrial licensing, and strict monitoring programs for water quality. Most responses urged a strong effort to represent Parks Canada's interests.

"Parks Canada may not have direct control over activities in the region but since the federal government controls much of the activity in the region we cannot accept that the lack of direct control is a valid excuse for allowing harmful activities in areas affecting the Nahanni National Park Reserve."

"Effective controls on upstream land and water users will be essential for maintaining environmental quality of the reserve. Parks Canada must actively promote its interests among other government agencies to ensure that the watershed is protected from adverse effects of mining and other developments."

REGIONAL TOURISM

There was a firm reaction to our question of the role of Parks Canada in regional tourism. A strong majority of people expressed an opposition to tourism development per se as an incompatible function in the management of a wilderness park. A consensus was shown that traditional tourism development could harm the features and attributes for which the park was set aside.

Some people mentioned the information and interpretation role of Parks Canada and the importance of ensuring that air charter firms and tourist boards appreciate the value and purpose of the park.

"The tourist trade should be left to the Government of the Northwest Territories and private enterprise. The only role for Parks Canada is to ensure the wilderness character is not compromised."

"This worries me. I have seen it employed with bad results."

"Extensive promotion is not the role of Parks Canada but of outfitters. Parks Canada's role is to control the outfitters."

CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

Parks Canada received a number of briefs and representations urging a greater emphasis on cultural considerations in the interpretation of the park. Native representatives spoke of the long history of their people in the Nahanni Country and of the special meaning some places held for them.

"Parks Canada clearly has a responsibility to treat history far more importantly than it has in the park purpose and objectives statement. The historical aspects should be promoted in a manner consistent with environmental protection and appreciation of wilderness."

"Places such as Rabbitkettle and Virginia Falls should be given native names."

OTHER COMMENTS

"Give more attention to disabled people."

"No trace camping should be implemented."

"Please develop hiking and ski trails from Tungsten to the upper portions of the river."

"You should have a convenience store at the entrance of the park."

"In a real wilderness there is no one to rescue you — to maximize people's respect for wilderness you must let them know their lives are on the line."

"Cans and bottles must be banned."

"Supervised access to the Valerie caves would be nice."

"I would like to see cabins made available on a first-come, first-served basis."

"Separate groups if you have to by having them leave at different times."

"Nahanni represents the Canada I emigrated for. Please ensure it is not debased by commercialism."

"Since most people will never see Nahanni, T.V. and movies are an excellent way to show the park at its best."

"The character of Nahanni should never be downgraded. Thank you for not turning Nahanni into Niagara Falls."

"Input from Nahanni Butte is essential; advertising should be put in the Native Press."

LAND CLAIMS

Nahanni was set aside as a 'reserve for a national park, subject to a settlement of any right, title, or interest of the people of native origin' when the National Parks Act was amended in 1974. Pending the legal settlement of native land claims native peoples retain the right to hunt, fish and trap in the park reserve. Parks Canada has no direct jurisdiction over the settlement of these claims but does provide the office of Native Claims with an assessment of the implications that potentially could affect a National Park.



NAHANNI

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

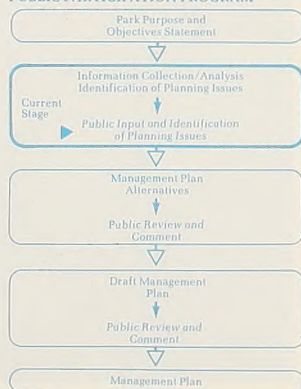


ALTERNATIVES FOR NAHANNI

The identification of issues and the collection of information is now largely completed. With the views of the various public interests now recorded, the planning team is developing alternative solutions for each planning issue. These alternatives will range within the Planning Principles outlined in the first newsletter. The alternatives will still provide degrees of latitude in managing and developing the park.

Besides these principles, the team considers Parks Canada policy, regulations, natural resource concerns, national and regional relationships, and, of course, the public feedback we have received from you. These alternatives will be released in another newsletter in the next few months, and will form the basis for the next public review. Only after public review of these alternatives will the planning team proceed to the last stage of the program and propose a final plan.

NAHANNI MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- The planning team will release alternatives for Nahanni for your review and evaluation early in the new year.
- Public meetings will be held shortly afterwards to get your opinions and comments. The exact times and locations will be advertised prior to the meetings.
- Your comments, suggestions, and ideas are welcome throughout the program. If there is any additional background information regarding the issues or the planning program you would like to address, you may write to:

Nahanni
Public Participation
Parks Canada
4th Floor, 391 York Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 9Z9



NAHANNI NATIONAL PARK RESERVE/ PARK PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

As a result of comments and suggestions received from the first Newsletter, briefs and meetings, a revised **PARK PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT** is presented here:

1.0 PARK DESCRIPTION

1.1 Physical Description

Nahanni National Park Reserve occupies a 4766 square kilometre area in the heart of the Mackenzie Mountains. Located in the southeast corner of the Northwest Territories, the park is a wilderness corridor centred along the course of the South Nahanni and Flat rivers.

The park occupies one-seventh of the South Nahanni watershed which drains an area of 35,000 square kilometres into

the Mackenzie drainage basin via the Liard River.

Nahanni National Park Reserve is the Natural Area of Canadian Significance representative of the Mackenzie Mountains Natural Region. Located in the northern section of the Cordilleran physiographic region, the area is mainly mountainous with a diversified topography consisting of mountain ranges, rolling hills, elevated plateaux, broad depressions, and incised river valleys. In the east and central park areas, sandstones, shales, and limestones of dissected mountain ranges predominate. These contrast markedly with the classic alpine shapes of the igneous Ragged Range in the park's western extremity. One of the most striking landscape features of the park is the river entrenchment of the lower South Nahanni. Untouched by glaciation, the river has formed steep-walled canyons and sheer cliffs, in some places over 1000 metres deep. Perhaps the best known feature of the park is Virginia Falls.

Other landform features of significance include numerous hot springs exemplified by Wildmint and Rabbittkettle Hot Springs. The sheer granite faces of the Ragged Range are world renowned by the international climbing fraternity. A spectacular karst above First Canyon, and Grotte Valerie, a fine example of a solution cave, represent the well developed features of the aqueous solution of limestone. The sub-Arctic setting of these features, in an area unmodified by glaciation, is especially noteworthy.

The climate of the park area is continental. Wide monthly variations in temperature and precipitation exist year to year. Variations in temperature and precipitation are also apparent between the east and west ends of the park; the eastern end being generally warmer and drier. Hot, dry summer weather may predominate for weeks, yet snow has been recorded in valleys of both the Flat and South Nahanni rivers in all months of the year.

The vegetation of the park is predominantly boreal with a transition from lowland wet areas to alpine tundra. White spruce and trembling aspen

characterize valley bottoms. Montane and subalpine zones are by far the most common vegetation zones in the park with extensive spruce and pine mixtures. Several noteworthy plant communities are represented around hot springs, alluvial fans, and in the karst plateaux.

Nahanni includes portions of the habitats of significant wildlife species such as Dall's sheep, black and grizzly bear, wolf, golden eagle, peregrine falcon, and trumpeter swan. An unusual faunal diversity is found in the park for such a northern location because of the variation in topography and vegetation. The rugged and remote nature of the Nahanni country has also served to protect its varied wildlife species.

Access to Nahanni can be achieved by a variety of routes and modes. There are no roads to the park. The Liard Highway from Fort Nelson to the Mackenzie Highway allows road access to within 64 river kilometres of the eastern park boundary. Scheduled air services are available to Fort Simpson, Watson Lake and Fort Liard. The village of Nahanni Butte is the closest community to the park, 32 kilometres from the eastern park boundary. Chartered float planes have been the usual mode of access to Nahanni headwaters for visitors using non-motorized methods of river travel. Road access to tributaries of the upper South Nahanni is possible via Tungsten or the Canol Road.

1.2 Park Use, Facilities, Services, and Programs

The park's administration headquarters is located in Fort Simpson. A year-round operations centre is located at Nahanni Butte warden station.

Visitor facilities are few in keeping with the park's wilderness objectives. Six primitive campsite areas are located along the 300 kilometre course of the South Nahanni River through the park. Visitors may register at the Fort Simpson headquarters, Nahanni Butte warden station, or at Rabbittkettle Hot Springs. Check-in stations are located at Virginia Falls, Deadman Valley, and Kraus Hot Springs. Two camping areas are currently set aside for the designated use of powerboat outfitters.

Nahanni receives over 500 visitors per year. The majority of visitors, 71%, are Canadians. Americans comprise 22% of total visitation with the remainder being primarily of western European origin.

The visitor season in Nahanni is short. The period during which the rivers are navigable and traditional summer travel patterns, result in peak visitation during July and August (36% and 53% of visitation respectively). The shoulder seasons are June and September (with 6% and 5% of visitation respectively). Day use is limited to fly-in visitation to Virginia Falls. Remoteness, severity of climate, and the absence of facilities virtually negate the potential for winter use.

River travel is the most practical and popular mode of experiencing the park. Of the various types of river travel, 65% is non-motorized use (rafts, kayaks, canoes) while 15% is powered (scows, jet-boats, airboats). Almost 25% of total visitation is commercially guided by licensed outfitters. The park controls both air access and motorized boat use.

The majority of visitors come to experience Nahanni's awesome canyons and Virginia Falls, a spectacle of incredible power, within the setting of a wilderness river corridor. The park encourages appreciation and enjoyment of its wilderness, rugged environment and natural beauty. Visitor experiences of the thrill of superb wild river touring which is the primary visitor activity in the park.

The only interpretive event currently offered in Nahanni is a guided tour of Rabbitkettie Hot Springs. Although there are no developed trails in the park, opportunities for off-river hiking to alpine tundra areas, and ridge walking, are among the finest in the country. Opportunities for nature study and photography are outstanding.

1.3 Considerations

The wilderness river character of Nahanni was a prime rationale for the park's establishment. It is important to recognize that this feature is part of the natural heritage resources of the park and should be considered as a paramount factor in the park management and development.

Although Parks Canada's program is not primarily one of regional, social, or economic development, it is recognized that Nahanni exists within a social and economic sphere of the Northwest Territories. Parks Canada has a commitment to consider the impact of its operations relative to regional concerns. This includes issues such as fire management, co-operation in wildlife management, and recognizing the rights of native peoples as guaranteed by the 1974 "Park Reserve" clause amending the National Parks Act. The park will co-operate with agencies working in adjacent areas by liaising on projects of mutual interest such as tourism and territorial park development.

Wildlife harvesting provides native residents of the area with a traditional lifestyle and an important source of income. Certain areas of the park have been traditional hunting and trapping grounds. As a result of various aspects of park operations, employment and economic opportunities accrue to local and regional residents.

Because Nahanni is located at the downstream end of the South Nahanni watershed, it is imperative that Parks Canada remains aware of and involved in regional planning, water use licensing, and overall development of the watershed. Through inter-agency co-operation, Parks Canada will help to ensure that the park's water quality and environmental integrity are maintained.

The status of Nahanni as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Canada's obliga-

tions as a member state adhering to the 1972 World Heritage Convention, commits Environment Canada to ensure the preservation of the characteristics for which Nahanni was nominated to the World Heritage List.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 Purpose of the Park in the National Park System

Nahanni National Park Reserve is an outstanding example of northern wilderness rivers, canyons, gorges and alpine tundra. The park protects for all time a Natural Area of Canadian Significance representative of the Mackenzie Mountains natural region and enables present and future generations to continue to appreciate and experience the park's wilderness environment.

2.2 Heritage Resources and Processes

The Nahanni wilderness river corridor exhibits one of the most impressive canyon systems in Canada. The South Nahanni is an especially powerful river with large flow volumes and great seasonal variations. Virginia Falls is one of North America's great cataracts, with almost twice the vertical drop of Niagara Falls. The lower reaches of the South Nahanni River are bordered by sub-Arctic karst landscapes recognized to be of particular scientific significance. This karst has escaped glaciation for up to 300,000 years, an unusual occurrence in such northern latitudes.

The limestone solution caves above First Canyon number in the hundreds. Some exceptional examples such as Grotte Valerie display extensive development of caverns, ice-falls, and other cave features. Grotte Valerie is also noted for the discovery of Dall's sheep skeletons inside the labyrinth, some of which are over 2500 years old.

The canyons, superb alpine tundra, and the crags of the Ragged Range provide habitats for a variety of animal species which are coming under increasing pressure as development extends into the region. Particularly significant wildlife includes Dall's sheep, grizzly bear, peregrine falcon, mountain goat, and woodland caribou.

Other features of particular note abound in the park. The Sand Blowouts is an area of sandstone outcrop displaying fantastic formations of contorted, wind-sculptured arches and pillars, while the glaciated peaks of the Ragged Range provide superb examples of cirques, hanging valleys, and Matterhorn peaks.

Although the native history of Nahanni dates far into the past, little cultural record remains of this remote mountain region. Its people, ethnologically classed as Goat or Mountain Indians and Kaska Indians were known historically as "Nahanni" meaning literally "people over there, far away". The first European contact occurred in the 1820's when the fur trade reached the region. However, it was the turn of the century gold rush that started the influx of explorers into the mountains of the Nahanni country. The death or disappearance of a number of prospectors fuelled the macabre tales that gave the park some of its foreboding place names: Deadmen Valley, Headless Creek, the Funeral Range. These elements have been integral to the public perception of the region and the park in particular.

3.0 PARK OBJECTIVES

3.1 Protection and Preservation of Natural and Cultural Resources

3.1.1 Natural Heritage Resources

Parks Canada will protect for all time the wilderness river corridor of Nahanni National Park Reserve by ensuring the perpetuation of its wildlife habitats and populations, vegetation communities, land and water ecosystems. These in-

clude nationally and internationally significant resources such as the karst uplands, Virginia Falls, hot springs and their vegetation communities, trumpeter swan nesting areas, the Sand Blowouts, and Grotte Valerie.

The Nahanni wilderness will be maintained as an essentially unaltered, primitive, and unpolluted corridor, and will be sustained so that Nahanni will remain a superb wilderness representation of the Mackenzie Mountain natural region.

3.1.2 Historic and Cultural Resources

Parks Canada will protect significant cultural resources in the park. The native and European history and traditions will be recorded to provide visitors with the opportunity to understand and appreciate the colourful history of the park and its peoples.

3.2 Appreciation, Understanding, and Enjoyment of Park Resources

Parks Canada will provide appropriate and compatible opportunities for the public to appreciate, understand, and enjoy the significant resources of Nahanni including the canyon systems, hot springs, karst landscapes, alpine tundra, and wildlife species of the park. The primary experience offered by Nahanni is the thrill of superb wilderness river touring. Opportunities for compatible modes of access, and the provision, where necessary, of appropriate facilities, will be afforded to visitors in a manner that maintains Nahanni's river corridor wilderness. Interpretation of the park will include both natural and cultural themes.

3.3 Regional Integration

Parks Canada will ensure that the planning, management, and development of Nahanni is, where possible, compatible with local and regional considerations in a mutually beneficial manner. This includes:

- integrating the wildlife and fire management procedures in the park with those of peripheral areas with the involved agencies and jurisdictions;
- working with Government of the North West Territories agencies to ensure that compatible and mutual areas of interest are considered in the development of regional tourism development;
- maintaining a liaison with local communities to address mutual concerns in terms of park management, employment opportunities, and wildlife harvesting within the park boundaries; and
- co-operating through various advisory and joint regional planning efforts with federal agencies in the monitoring and management of regional land use issues that concern the park. For instance, the pristine quality of waters flowing into Nahanni is essential for the perpetuation of the park's character. Alterations that degrade the water baseline quality of the park are unacceptable, and Parks Canada will work with the appropriate agencies having jurisdictions outside of the park's boundaries to ensure the protection of that quality.

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